



BLACK CANYON *Reservoir* **MONTOUR WILDLIFE RECREATION AREA**

Newsbrief No. 1

March 2002

**BUREAU OF
RECLAMATION**

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Begins Resource Management Plan for Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour Wildlife Recreation Area

What is the Purpose of the RMP?

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) has just started to prepare a Resource Management Plan (RMP, or the Plan) for the Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour Wildlife Recreation Area (WRA), located along the Payette River in western Idaho. The RMP preparation process will take approximately 2 years; this amount of time is needed so that all stakeholders, including the general public, have ample opportunity to express their interests, concerns, and viewpoints, and to comment on the Plan as it develops. Management of the area and its resources affects all of you in different ways, and it is therefore essential to incorporate stakeholder input into Plan development.

The RMP will be Reclamation's blueprint for the future use, management, and site

development of Reclamation's lands over the next 10 years. The RMP will identify goals and objectives for resource management, specify desired land and resource use patterns, and explain the policies and actions that will be implemented during the 10-year life of the Plan to achieve those goals and objectives.

In preparing the Plan, Reclamation will explore a range of possible alternative management approaches, and identify a proposed plan as the intended course of action. In addition, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires that Reclamation examine the potential environmental effects of implementing the actions identified in the RMP. A separate document called an Environmental Assessment (EA) will be prepared to analyze potential environmental impacts.

Black Canyon Area

The Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WRA are located in Gem County, Idaho, approximately 6 miles from the town of Emmett and about 30 miles northwest of Boise. Black Canyon Dam, which impounds Black Canyon Reservoir in the Payette River

drainage, was constructed in 1924 with authorized uses including irrigation and power. Reclamation's reservoir lands cover about 1,100 surface water acres and a narrow strip of land surrounding the reservoir. There are four developed day use recreation sites on

Visit us on the World Wide Web - follow the
links to Black Canyon Reservoir and
Montour Wildlife Recreation Area

www.pn.usbr.gov

PUBLIC MEETING/ WORKSHOP

See details on page 8

Black Canyon Area (continued)

Reclamation lands at the reservoir – Black Canyon, Wild Rose, Cobblestone, and Triangle parks. Surrounding land uses are primarily agricultural and rural residential. Land ownership is a mixture of private and Federal lands predominantly managed by Reclamation and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Cultivated crops in the area include alfalfa, barley, corn, oats, and wheat; grazing permits have also been issued on Reclamation lands.

The Montour WRA includes approximately 1,100 acres of Reclamation land and is managed cooperatively with Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) primarily for wildlife habitat and recreation use

(mainly hunting). There is also one campground facility on the WRA. Reclamation originally acquired these lands in the early 1980s due to flooding concerns in the Montour Valley. In 1984, Reclamation prepared a management plan for the Montour WRA; the RMP will use this 1984 management plan as a basis, updating it to respond to changing conditions.



The RMP Planning Team

Preparing the RMP will involve an interdisciplinary Planning Team of outdoor recreation planners, natural resource specialists, biologists, landscape architects, and engineers. Reclamation will oversee the RMP process and has contracted with EDAW, Inc., a long-established land planning firm with previous experience preparing RMPs, as well as experience in Idaho. EDAW will be assisted by: CH2M Hill, an engineering and planning firm with an office in Boise; and John Petrovsky Associates, also in Boise, who brings prior experience and has designed and conducted a number of public involvement programs for similar projects.



Key Issues Identified to Date

Based on current conditions, Reclamation has identified a number of issues that need to be addressed by the RMP. Listed on page 3 are the preliminary issues identified to date (in no particular order). Dialog with stakeholders and input from the public will

no doubt reveal more issues. The attached Mail-In Response Form provides space for you to comment on or add to this list. It also requests your views regarding the priority of these issues.

Issues

1. Agency coordination (e.g., IDFG, BLM, and others)
2. RMP enforcement (e.g., for vandalism, litter, trespass)
3. Boundary and encroachment related issues
4. Pow wow permits and other special events
5. Group use at Black Canyon Reservoir parks
6. Overall carrying capacity of reservoir/boating conflicts
7. Desire for overnight camping facilities at the reservoir
8. Accommodate large RVs at Montour campground
9. Potential hunter conflicts
10. Potential for new concessions and/or marina
11. Desire for better signage and interpretive programs
12. Accessibility of recreation facilities
13. Restroom conditions and potential upgrades
14. Future management of recreation sites by non-Federal management partners
15. Enforcing restriction of off-road vehicle use (on reservoir lands and at Montour)
16. Desire for a disc golf use area
17. General impacts to cultural resources
18. Status of nomination of Montour town site (currently nominated to National Register status)
19. Potential impacts of recreation use on wildlife
20. Noxious weed control
21. Vegetation management at Montour WRA
22. Clean-up of Montour WRA
23. Loss of bat habitat
24. Fish habitat enhancement needs
25. Water related issues (e.g., irrigation, supply, groundwater)
26. Sediment and erosion issues
27. Management and use of boat ramps off of County road
28. Road safety and maintenance issues
29. Parking along County Road (safety issue)
30. Dock maintenance and safety
31. New development near Reclamation lands
32. Future of the railroad grade
33. Dog training use on Reclamation lands
34. Management of gate at Cobblestone park
35. Grazing leases and cropping agreements
36. Dam security



Public Involvement Program

To integrate the broad spectrum of public interests involved in planning for the RMP, Reclamation is organizing an extensive public involvement program. The goal of public involvement is to reach as many of you as possible and to encourage active participation by all interested stakeholders. Public opinions are very important in this process, and your input is needed to assist Reclamation in making meaningful decisions and building informed consent on a proposed plan. To achieve this goal, Reclamation has designed a public involvement program that includes:

- Newsbriefs like this one;
- Public meetings/workshops;
- an Ad Hoc Work Group (stakeholder group); and
- a project website.

Newsbriefs - Reclamation will prepare four Newsbriefs during the project, with this being the first. The purpose of this first Newsbrief is to introduce the project, explain the public involvement program, and identify the initial list of issues. Initial input by return mail is also requested in the enclosed Mail-in

**Public
Involvement
Program (continued)**

Response Form. Future Newsbriefs will summarize results of the resource inventory studies and analyses; identify and summarize the full range of issues that the RMP will address; describe the goals, objectives, and criteria to be used in developing alternatives; illustrate and describe the alternative courses of action considered in the RMP; and present the substance of and rationale behind the proposed plan and other components of the RMP.

Public Meetings/Workshops - Reclamation will host two public meetings/workshops over the course of the project, with meetings held in Emmett. All of the meetings are intended to obtain public input into the planning process and, as the study proceeds, to share the results. The first meeting is scheduled for April 24, 2002. For more information on the meeting time and location, see the last page of this Newsbrief. The goals of the first meetings are to: (1) introduce the RMP process, (2) identify issues to be addressed by the RMP, (3) obtain public input regarding Ad Hoc Work Group representation, and (4) obtain scoping input for the Environmental Assessment being prepared on the RMP.

The second and final public meeting/workshop (tentatively scheduled for August 2003) will focus on describing and obtaining commentary on the range of alternatives (including the Preferred Alternative) presented in the draft EA. Comments received at the second meeting will be used to finalize the EA and refine the RMP.

Ad Hoc Work Group - Reclamation is inviting the participation of representative stakeholders by organizing an Ad Hoc Work Group for the project. This Work Group will include representatives from key interest groups, jurisdictions, and agencies with a significant interest in the future management and use of these lands

and waters. The Work Group will work interactively with Reclamation's Planning Team over the course of the project, assisting in defining issues, developing goals and objectives, discussing policy and plan options, and assessing alternative plans. The Work Group will also contribute to Reclamation's decisions related to the final proposed plan.

The Work Group is being formed in early 2002. Reclamation hopes to hold the first Work Group meeting in May, with about three more meetings scheduled over the course of the RMP effort. A preliminary list of potential Work Group members is provided below.

- IDFG
- Gem County Commissioner
- Gem County Sheriff
- Gem County Weed Control Board
- Shoshone-Paiute Tribes
- Shoshone-Bannock Tribes
- Farming/grazing interests
- Idaho Northern Railroad
- Bureau of Land Management
- Idaho Department of Transportation
- Audubon Society
- Hunting group
- Boating group
- City of Emmett
- Non-agricultural homeowners representative
- Bass Club
- Personal watercraft (PWC) group
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Idaho Wildlife Federation
- Gem Economic Development Association

If you would like to provide input regarding the range of interests that should be included in the Work Group or have a specific suggestion regarding interest groups, the attached Mail-In Response Form provides a method for you to provide such input.

Mail-In Response Form

If you do not plan on attending the first public meeting, or would like to respond to us in writing, please consider answering the questions below and mailing back this page of the Newsbrief. We appreciate your cooperation and look forward to hearing from you.

1. Do you: *(Please check all boxes that apply)*

- ☐ Reside in Gem County
- ☐ Reside elsewhere but within a 1.5-hour drive of Montour Valley
- ☐ Reside more than a 1.5-hour drive from Montour Valley

2. What is your zip code? _____

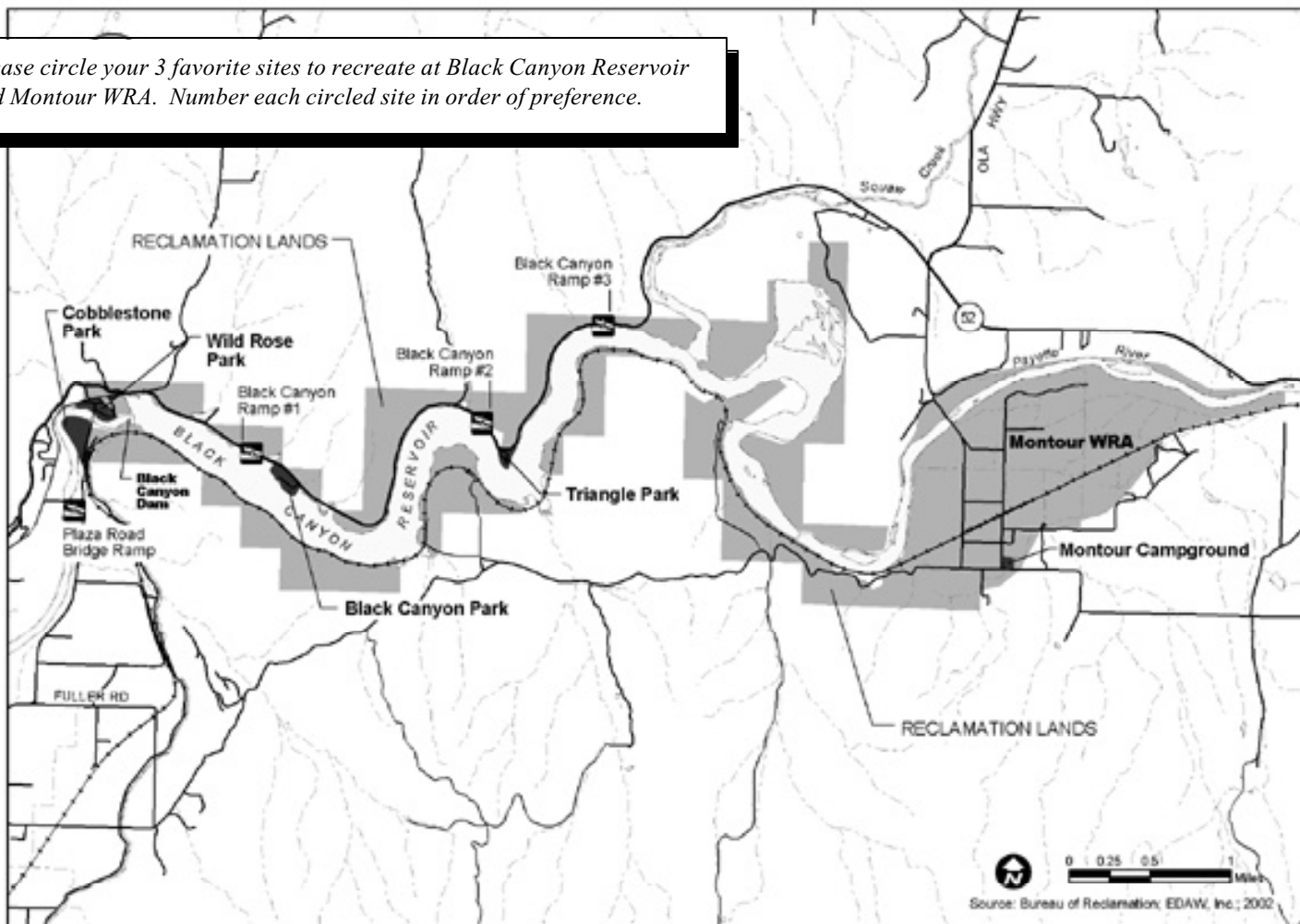
3. Why do you enjoy living near/visiting the area? *(please check all boxes that apply)*

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Have friends and relatives in the area | <input type="checkbox"/> Fish and wildlife |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation opportunities | <input type="checkbox"/> Rural character |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scenery | <input type="checkbox"/> Developed facilities/services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inexpensive | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
- (please specify)*
- _____

4. What recreation activities do you participate in at the reservoir and/or Montour WRA? *(Please check all boxes that apply)* What is your primary activity? *(Please circle letter that applies)*

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A. Sightseeing | <input type="checkbox"/> K. Hiking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> B. Fishing from boat | <input type="checkbox"/> L. Bicycling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> C. Fishing from shore | <input type="checkbox"/> M. Camping |
| <input type="checkbox"/> D. Swimming/sunbathing | <input type="checkbox"/> N. Hunting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> E. Power boating/waterskiing | <input type="checkbox"/> O. Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> F. Jetskiing | <i>(please specify)</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> G. Sailing/windsurfing | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> H. Canoeing/kayaking | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I. Picnicking | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> J. Birdwatching | |

Please circle your 3 favorite sites to recreate at Black Canyon Reservoir and Montour WRA. Number each circled site in order of preference.



Please Return by April 8, 2002

5. Using the preliminary list of 36 issues *shown on page 3* of the Newsbrief as a guide, please list the issues that are of the greatest concern to you and number them in order of importance (1 being most important). If there are other issues not listed that you feel are important, please include them below.

6. Do you plan to attend the public meeting scheduled for April 24, 2002?

☐ yes ☐ no

7. Do you want to remain on the mailing list to receive subsequent Newsbriefs for this project? (In either case, please provide and/or confirm your name and address)

☐ yes ☐ no

8. Is there anyone else you know who would like to be on the mailing list? Please add their names and addresses.

9. Is there another agency, specific organization, or group of individuals you feel should be represented on the Ad Hoc Work Group described on page 4 of the Newsbrief?

Question responses and letters should be mailed to Carolyn Burpee Stone, Reclamation's project manager, at the address shown below. Please be sure Reclamation's address is on the outside.

Thank you for your comments!



Please fold in thirds, seal, and affix first class stamp



U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
PN Regional Office
Attn: Carolyn Burpee Stone, PN3902
1150 North Curtis Road, Suite 100
Boise, ID 83706-1234



Public Involvement Program (continued)

Website - To increase public access to information about the Black Canyon RMP, Reclamation is designing a project website, accessible via the Internet. Electronic mail (e-mail) and the World Wide Web (WWW) are preferred methods of communication for many public agencies, interest groups,

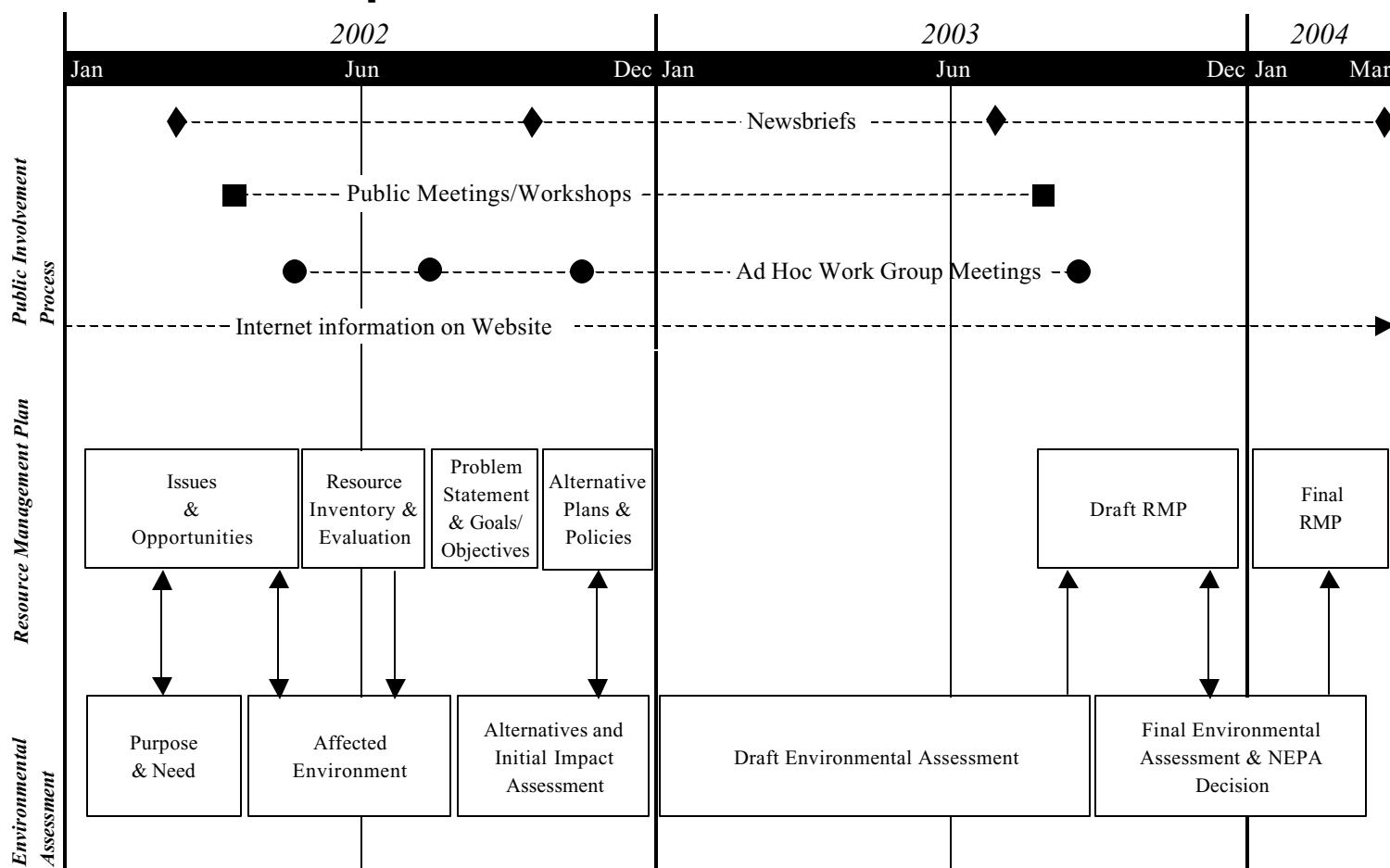
businesses, and a growing percentage of the general public. Information posted on the websites will include meeting announcements, project information, and feedback mechanisms to receive public input (such as an electronic version of the

The Project Schedule

response form contained in this Newsbrief). As shown in the diagram below, the first stage of the process is to identify key issues to be addressed by the RMP. Future phases of the process include a resource inventory and evaluation; resource-specific analyses; formulation of goals and objectives; development of plans, policies, and guidelines; and preparation of draft and final documents for public and agency review.

Beginning in the fall of 2002, the planning effort will turn to assessing alternative management approaches, developing policies aimed at addressing identified issues, and achieving the goals and objectives of the plan. Ultimately, a proposed plan will evolve from the efforts of the Planning Team and from input by the Ad Hoc Work Group and the general public through the Public Involvement Program. The final RMP is targeted for completion by March 2004.

Schedule and Workplan



Public Meeting/ Workshop

You are invited to the First Public Meeting and Workshop

To “kick off” the project, introduce the RMP, and get your input, Reclamation is holding the first of two public meetings/workshops:

Date: April 24, 2002
Location: American Legion - Post 49
120 North Hayes
City: Emmett, ID
Time: 7 pm to 9 pm

This location was selected in part because of the facilities’ accessibility to people with disabilities as required under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Interested persons needing special assistance in this regard should contact Helene Tomaszewski, Area Office Accessibility Coordinator at (208) 334-1462 at least one week before the scheduled meeting so that arrangements can be made. TTYTDD # 1-800-833-6388.



BCNB1

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